

Editorial

If we consider Chinese medicine to be a living being then, over the last six months, the being has experienced internal disharmony of qi and invasion of external pathogens.

If the theories and knowledge of Chinese medicine are the kidney essence of this being, then our practitioners are the heart. The Chinese Medicine Board of Australia (CMBA) is the regulating organ, the liver; whereas our professional associations, such as the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd (AACMA), are the spleen.

Firstly, when the registration standards were released this may have unsettled many practitioners as any changes could disharmonise the internal balance of the being. Therefore, the liver overacts on the heart. When the heart is disturbed, it unsettles the *shen* of the being. Disturbed heart *shen* may cause various forms of illnesses. In the long-term, it will eventually damage kidney essence, the very form of energy we want to preserve and nurture. The spleen has worked hard to support the heart and counter balance the liver. For instance AACMA has lodged various submissions to the CMBA on a number of standards issues, including English language standards, and has also supported the members by helping them complete the application form. In addition, the CMBA has also tried to smooth the regulating phase by releasing a number of communiqués. Although there has been disharmony of qi, the being has amazing internal adjustment systems and balance and counter-balance systems. At the time of this editorial, I am sure that the *shen* would have settled a bit and I believe, in the end, the being will regain its harmony.

Secondly, Friends of Science in Medicine (FSM), an organisation which purportedly promotes 'a rigorous application of best science' to health education and practice, has been attacking Chinese medicine and called to cease national registration of our profession on the ground that Chinese medicine is not evidence based. FSM in some way has become the external

pathogens attempting to invade the being. We all know we need both the treatment to expel pathogens and the treatment to strengthen righteous qi in order to successfully defend the being. As a journal advocating rigorous methodologies in Chinese medicine research, the Australian Journal of Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine treats 'the invasion' seriously and has invited a number of educators, researchers, and practitioners from Chinese medicine, complementary medicine and integrative medicine, and a philosopher to respond. You will read a series of commentaries as Guest Editorials in this issue. We hope these expert opinions will provide the means you need to 'expel' as well as 'strengthen'.

It is pleasing to see that the strengthening force is not only from the within, but also from the without, and it is pleasing to see like-minded institutions. In this issue, we also introduce three organisations, including the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM), Painaustralia and the Australasian Integrative Medicine Association (AIMA). You will find a range of activities of Chinese medicine within different fields of other health practice and research.

Our journal celebrates diversity in Chinese medicine. In this issue, we present you with a randomised control trial examining the use of one specific form of acupressure for neck pain and a two-part paper on emotions, desires and fire in Chinese medicine. The latter two papers bring us back to the classical and historical discussion on how desires and emotions disturb the heart and kidney. Given the high prevalence of mental health problems in the modern society, you will find these two papers stimulating your thoughts and helping you re-examine the practice.

We hope this issue bring some healing to our practitioners by 'calming the *shen* and strengthening the righteous qi'.

Zhen Zheng
Editor-in-Chief